The Becoming
by Ian Potter

THE DOCTOR: PETER DAVISON
Time traveller.

TURLOUGH: MARK STRICKSON
Time traveller's companion.

WAYWALKER:
(F, young) An alien girl approaching adulthood.

ELDER:
(M/F, old) Frail alien chief.

AUTUMN VOICE:
(F, mature) An ancestral spirit in the girl's mind.

SPRING VOICE:
(M, mature) An ancestral spirit in the girl's mind.

ALSO: HUNGERERS [ape-like predators, growling and snarling]; **VILLAGERS.**

DIRECTOR: BARNABY EDWARDS
SCRIPT EDITOR: ALAN BARNES
PRODUCER: DAVID RICHARDSON
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: NICHOLAS BRIGGS & JASON HAIGH-ELLERY

BIG FINISH PRODUCTIONS LTD © 2016

SCENE 1: EXT. MOUNTAIN — SCREE SLOPE

FX: THIN WINDS. WAYWALKER LABOURS UP A SLOPE, SCATTERING THIN DEBRIS BEHIND.

WAYWALKER:
(HALTS) Which way?

FX: WHISPERING VOICES SWIRL IN HER HEAD. NB: AUTUMN AND SPRING VOICES ARE ONLY **EVER** HEARD FROM WAYWALKER'S POV.

AUTUMN VOICE:
See the mountain as it has been.

SPRING VOICE:
Find the path from its trails.

FX: WITH THE VOICES, GHOSTLY HINTS OF OTHER TIMES: BEES BUZZING, A WHIRL OF DRY LEAVES.

AUTUMN AND SPRING VOICES:
The way will show itself.

WAYWALKER:
(SEES PATH) I see it! There!

FX: WAYWALKER WALKS ON. CROSS TO:

SCENE 2: EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK

FX: STRONG WINDS. TARDIS ARRIVES. DOOR OPENS. DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH STEP OUT.

TURLOUGH:
So where are we now, Doctor?

DOCTOR:
We've landed on a world in a totally unmapped section of the Pandana system!

TURLOUGH:
And I suppose you want to be first to explore it?

DOCTOR:
Well, it'd be rude not to, wouldn't it? Just a quick recce, stretch our legs, get the lie of the land.

TURLOUGH:
The lie of the land is mountainous, icy and barren.

FX: TURLOUGH SHUTS TARDIS DOOR.

DOCTOR:
Up here, Turlough, yes, but look down into the valley!

TURLOUGH:
What about it?

FX: TURLOUGH JOINS DOCTOR.

DOCTOR:
Careful, it's a bit treacherous underfoot. — There. Cultivated land, see? Fencing, irrigation channels, some kind of crop plant. An intelligent agrarian society.

TURLOUGH:
They've the intelligence not to come up here, anyway.

DOCTOR:
Yes, perhaps some shelter from this wind might be wise. Let's get down below the tree line, shall we?

TURLOUGH:
If you can call those scrubby things trees.

DOCTOR:
Yes, We may have picked the wrong season to come calling! Rather erratic sun in this system. Must make it hard for anything to thrive up here.

FX: HE STARTS DOWN, FOLLOWED BY TURLOUGH.

DOCTOR:
We'll take this way down, I think…

FX: PERSPECTIVE CHANGE. IN F/G, TWIGS AND FOLIAGE SHAKE AS WE OVERHEAR THE DIALOGUE FROM DISTANCE.

HUNGERER:
(WATCHING — SNORTS, GROWLS SOFTLY)

DOCTOR:
(DESCENDING) There's a few dried-out roots about here. Not quite enough to keep a top soil together, but they should shore up our path.

HUNGERER:
(HOWLS)

CROSS DIRECTLY TO:

SCENE 3: EXT. MOUNTAIN — DESCENDING FROM PEAK [CONTINUOUS]

FX: TURLOUGH AND DOCTOR EDGING DOWNWARDS. THE ECHOING HOWL HALTS THEM.

TURLOUGH:
I don't like the sound of that, Doctor.

DOCTOR:
No. Still, whatever it is, it probably wouldn't like the sound of us either.

TURLOUGH:
All the same…

DOCTOR:
Yes, best steer a course away.

FX: SCRUNCH OF STONES AS HE TURNS.

TURLOUGH:
You mean closer to that sheer drop?

DOCTOR:
Yes.

TURLOUGH:
And what if that's what that thing wants us to do?

DOCTOR:
Then I expect we'll have cheered it up no end. Come on.

FX: THEY HEAD DOWN IN A NEW DIRECTION.

SCENE 4: EXT. MOUNTAIN — CLIFF EDGE

FX: A WINDY DROP, LOW CREAK OF TREE SHIFTING ABOVE. WAYWALKER APPROACHES THROUGH DRY GRASSES.

WAYWALKER:
(RELIEVED) The ambrichor tree! (NOTICES) But I can't see any nests.

AUTUMN VOICE:
Among the sky roots. Above the fall. They will be there.

SPRING VOICE:
They are always there.

FX: OTHER DAYS IN WAYWALKER'S MIND: RAIN, A TRICKLING STREAM; LONG GRASSES BLOWING IN THE WIND.

AUTUMN VOICE:
Fewer or more, they wax and wane as all does. Look for their shine.

WAYWALKER:
But the sun's so small. It's not like it was.

SPRING VOICE:
Look for the light.

AUTUMN VOICE:
Find its glow.

FX: EFFECTS SNAP OFF.

WAYWALKER:
(GASPS) I can see a nest! Out over the drop, but some of the tree's gone. It'll be hard to reach.

SPRING VOICE:
The ways are fewer but the ways will remain.

FX: DISTANTLY —

HUNGERER:
(CALLS A HOWL)

ANOTHER HUNGERER:
(HOWLS IN RESPONSE)

WAYWALKER:
Hungerers!

SPRING VOICE:
Go fast.

AUTUMN VOICE:
They taste you on the wind.

SCENE 5: EXT. MOUNTAIN — APPROACHING CLIFF.

FX: HINT OF CLIFF-FACE WIND TO ONE SIDE. TURLOUGH AND DOCTOR DESCEND ROCKY TERRAIN INTO BRACKEN.

THIRD HUNGERER:
(CALLS FROM DISTANCE)

OTHER TWO HUNGERERS:
(HOWL IN RESPONSE)

DOCTOR:
Call and response. Interesting.

TURLOUGH:
Is it?

DOCTOR:
Yes. It means they're social. Unless I'm very much mistaken, they're using those calls to come together.

TURLOUGH:
Terrific.

DOCTOR:
Resonance suggests a well-developed diaphragm… larger than a chimp, smaller than a bear. Probably need the lung capacity to handle these altitudes. I wonder what they eat?

TURLOUGH:
Unwary travellers, I imagine.

DOCTOR:
No, ordinarily. They can't expect the likes of us every tea-time.

TURLOUGH:
Oh good, we'll be a treat!

DOCTOR:
Can't be much on offer in this cold. Perhaps they build up fat reserves during the summer.

TURLOUGH:
For all you know this is summer.

DOCTOR:
Nonsense. Dried-out roots above the tree line, remember? Rather suggests warmer days.

SCENE 6: EXT. MOUNTAIN — OVER CLIFF EDGE

FX: WAYWALKER SHINS OUT OVER CLIFF ON A CREAKING TREE BOUGH.

WAYWALKER:
I'm scared, Old Ones.

SPRING VOICE:
The branches will support you. You are still small.

WAYWALKER:
They might not. Some are broken.

AUTUMN VOICE:
Choose a way you know others have taken.

WAYWALKER:
But the ambrichor's further out now. The nearest nests are empty!

SPRING VOICE:
Trust the branch you are on. It has never broken.

WAYWALKER:
(LOUD) It only needs to once!

FX: TREE CREAKS UNDER HER. SHE YELPS. CROSSFADE INTO:

SCENE 7: EXT. MOUNTAIN — IN WOODS [CONTINUOUS]

FX: LIGHT WIND THROUGH TREES. THE TAIL OF WAYWALKER'S YELP FROM DISTANCE.

DOCTOR:
Now, that was not one of our howling friends.

TURLOUGH:
It was a voice!

DOCTOR:
Well, so are the howls, technically, just not ones we can understand. Come on!

FX: HE RUSHES TOWARDS VOICE.

DOCTOR:
(RECEDING) When in doubt, head towards the unknown you can engage in conversation!

SCENE 8: EXT. MOUNTAIN — OVER CLIFF EDGE

WAYWALKER:
I'm by the nest. There's a pod ahead. What now?

SPRING VOICE:
Reach out and touch the ambrichor.

AUTUMN VOICE:
If the pod is ready, it will fall.

FX: SLIGHT FIZZING AS WAYWALKER HOLDS POD, THEN VEGETABLE FIBRES TWISTING AND SNAPPING.

WAYWALKER:
It's coming away! Letting go of the sky roots!

SPRING VOICE:
The ambrichor knows you.

FX: THE POD DROPS, TEARING AWAY FROM FINE ROOTS. THE WAYWAKER CATCHES IT (IT'S ROUGHLY GRAPEFRUIT SIZED). IT GLOOPS, FULL OF THICK LIQUID.

WAYWALKER:
It's heavy!

AUTUMN VOICE:
It is ripe.

SPRING VOICE:
Make your way back along the branch. You are ready for the Pathmaker.

FX: LOTS OF TREE CREAKING AS WAYWALKER MOVES ALONG.

WAYWALKER:
(EFFORT AS SHE STRUGGLES BACK ALONG HER BRANCH, ONE-HANDED)
With only one hand, it's hard…

HUNGERER:
(DISTANT HOWL)

AUTUMN VOICE:
Quickly!

FX: TREE CREAKING BECOMING CRACKING.

WAYWALKER:
Oh no. (TO VOICES) Help me, Old Ones! (NO RESPONSE; LOUDER)
Where have you gone? Why won't you talk to me? — Help me!!!

FX: THE DOCTOR RUNS IN THROUGH DRY GRASSES.

DOCTOR:
I'd be delighted!

WAYWALKER:
What are you?

DOCTOR:
No time. (HE HALTS AT CLIFF EDGE) Quick, reach out to me. Give me your (CLOCKS ALIEN BIOLOGY) … hand, I suppose.

WAYWALKER:
No.

DOCTOR:
Please. I can't come any closer, adding my weight to that branch isn't going to help at all. Just reach out towards me.

WAYWALKER:
No. I can't drop the ambrichor!

FX: CRACKING NOISES STRENGTHEN.

DOCTOR:
The ambrichor? That yellow fruit thing?

WAYWALKER:
Yes.

FX: TURLOUGH ARRIVES.

DOCTOR:
Right. Well, the thing is the branch you're holding onto is going to give way quite soon, and if you weren't holding on to that pod you'd have a free hand…

TURLOUGH:
(COMMANDING) Throw the pod here! Now!

WAYWALKER:
No. You mustn't touch it.

TURLOUGH:
Look. I'll catch it in my jacket.

FX: TURLOUGH PULLING JACKET OFF.

TURLOUGH:
See? Just throw it.

FX: A PERSUASIVE CREAK.

WAYWALKER:
Alright.

FX: EXERTION AS SHE THROWS. POD LANDS IN TURLOUGH'S JACKET.

TURLOUGH:
Got it!

DOCTOR:
Quickly, stretch forward as far as you can, and try to take my hand.

WAYWALKER:
(REACHING EFFORT)

FX: BRANCH PROPERLY CRACKING.

TURLOUGH:
It's no good, the branch is breaking!

DOCTOR:
Jump!

WAYWALKER:
(JUMPING EFFORT)

FX: BRANCH COLLAPSES AS SHE JUMPS — SMASHING INTO THE CLIFFSIDE, SPLINTERING AS IT FALLS.

DOCTOR:
(GASPS, CATCHING HER) Got you!

FX: THEY TUMBLE ONTO GRASS.

BEAT.

WAYWALKER:
(BREATHLESS) Thank you.

DOCTOR:
(BREATHLESS) Don't mention it.

WAYWALKER:
(BREATHLESS) But… what kind of creatures are you? Your pelts…

DOCTOR:
Ah, well — Turlough and I were born on worlds with rather fiercer suns. That's why we're not translucent.

TURLOUGH:
Unlike you.

WAYWALKER:
Worlds? So you're not Hungerers?

DOCTOR:
I'm the Doctor. And you are…?

WAYWALKER:
I am Waywalker. — I must have my ambrichor.

DOCTOR:
The pod, you mean? Turlough — would you be so kind?

FX: TURLOUGH PASSES JACKET.

TURLOUGH:
What is it, anyway? I can't believe it was worth risking yoiur life on that branch for.

WAYWALKER:
Don't touch it!

FX: WAYWALKER SNATCHES AMBRICHOR.

TURLOUGH:
I wasn't going to.

WAYWALKER:
I climbed the tree to harvest the ambrichor. I need it for my Becoming.

FX: CRASHING IN THE TREES A WAY OFF.

WAYWALKER:
Quickly, we must go!

TURLOUGH:
Why?

WAYWALKER:
The Hungerers are coming.

DOCTOR:
"Hungerers"?

TURLOUGH:
That doesn't sound good.

2 x HUNGERERS:
(HOWLING AND GROWLING AMONGST TREES, OFF)

TURLOUGH:
So, do these “hungerers” just want to eat your ambrichor, or…?

WAYWALKER:
They don’t just eat ambrichor.

FX: WAYWALKER MENTAL POV.

AUTUMN VOICE:
They like to feast on our brains.

SPRING VOICE:
They seek to devour the way.

DOCTOR:
I think we should run, don’t you?

WAYWALKER:
(TO VOICES) Where should I run, Old Ones?

TURLOUGH:
(‘DOES SHE MEAN US’?) ‘Old ones’?

WAYWALKER:
(TO DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH) Downward! Follow me!

FX: THEY RACE OFF. CROSSFADE TO:

SCENE 9: EXT. MOUNTAIN — LOWER SLOPES [FEW MOMENTS LATER]

FX: RUNNING DOWNHILL. WAYWALKER LEADS. HUNGERERS SCAMPER BEHIND.

TURLOUGH:
They're coming after us!

DOCTOR:
How many?

TURLOUGH:
Two, I think!

DOCTOR:
We definitely heard three before.

WAYWALKER:
Come on! If we can reach the walled lands we'll be s—[afe.]

FX: WAYWALKER HALTS.

WAYWALKER:
No!

HUNGERER:
(GROWLS CLOSE BY AHEAD — PADS FORWARD, SNORTING)

FX: TURLOUGH AND DOCTOR SKID TO STANDSTILL. OTHER HUNGERERS CONTINUE TO PURSUE.

TURLOUGH:
That'll be the third, then…

WAYWALKER:
I've never seen Hungerers here, not in any season.

TURLOUGH:
We've been ambushed, haven't we?

DOCTOR:
Corralled, I'd say. No way forward. No way back.
Clever. (STEPS FORWARD)

HUNGERER:
(ROARS)

WAYWALKER:
Don't approach it!

DOCTOR:
Yes — a reasoning intelligence, but not inclined to chat, I fear.

OTHER 2 x HUNGERERS:
(APPROACH, SNARLING)

TURLOUGH:
Those jaws weren't made for talking.

DOCTOR:
No. Plan B, I think. Waywalker, Turlough - head over to me, slowly. We don't want to enrage them. I'd like to try something.

FX: THEY HEAD OVER.

DOCTOR:
Nice and slowly now, if we can back into this corner.

FX: DOCTOR STARTS WALKING BACKWARDS.

TURLOUGH:
What? That's what they want!

DOCTOR:
Don't argue, Turlough. Come on, back under this outcrop. You too, Waywalker.

FX: WAYWALKER, TURLOUGH AND DOCTOR WALK BACKWARDS INTO A ROCKY CORNER AS…

3 x HUNGERERS:
(ADVANCE, SNORTING)

WAYWALKER:
(TO SELF) Old Ones preserve me.

FX: DOCTOR RUMMAGES IN POCKET.

TURLOUGH:
What are you doing?

DOCTOR:
I was thinking about an outswinger. There!

FX: HE PULLS OUT CRICKET BALL.

TURLOUGH:
You're going to attack three great ape creatures with a cricket ball?

DOCTOR:
No, not exactly. The conditions aren't ideal, I think I'd best forego a run-up. (EFFORT AS HE THROWS BALL)

TURLOUGH:
So, was that what you call a 'wide'?

DOCTOR:
(PLEASED) Turlough, you're learning!

3 x HUNGERERS:
(DRAW NEARER, SNORTING)

TURLOUGH:
Well, you didn't hit any of them.

DOCTOR:
I didn't intend to. I noticed some very loose scree on the slope above. With a bit of luck…

FX: RUMBLING ABOVE. THE BEGINNINGS OF A LANDSLIDE.

TURLOUGH:
You've started a landslide!

DOCTOR:
Get down! Make yourselves as small as you can!

FX: ROCKS AND DEBRIS ROAR DOWN.

3 x HUNGERERS:
(DISTRESS CALLS AS THEY RETREAT HASTILY)

TURLOUGH:
Waywalker – watch out for that boulder!

FX: A BOUNCING, CRACKING BOULDER. AN IMPACT.

WAYWALKER:
(CRIES OUT) My leg!

FX: LANDSLIDE SUBSIDES.

TURLOUGH:
Well, those Hungerers appear to have fled.

DOCTOR:
Rather a well-pitched Yorker, if I say so myself.

WAYWALKER:
(MISERABLY) I've failed.

DOCTOR:
Sorry?

WAYWALKER:
In my test. I can't take my ambrichor to the Cavern now.

DOCTOR:
Nonsense, I'm sure you can. (PULLING WAYWALKER TO HER FEET) Here, let me help you up.

WAYWALKER:
(IN PAIN) Ah!

DOCTOR:
Oh dear. Your leg?

TURLOUGH:
I saw her take a hit in the rockfall.

DOCTOR:
Let me see.

FX: WAYWALKER WINCES AS DOCTOR EXAMINES HER.

DOCTOR:
I think it's just bruising. Hard to be sure, given such unusual biology, but I think I can still see intact bone there. This clouding in the subdermis might be the equivalent of scabbing…

TURLOUGH:
She's not a case study, you know.

DOCTOR:
No, of course not. Sorry. How are you feeling, Waywalker?

WAYWALKER:
Broken.

DOCTOR:
Well, I'm sure we can fix that. We're going to help you.

WAYWALKER:
To the Cavern?

DOCTOR:
I was thinking to your village. Is the Cavern nearer?

WAYWALKER:
It lies between the walled lands and the tree.

DOCTOR:
Alright, if that's what you want.

TURLOUGH:
(ASIDE) Is she fit to move?

DOCTOR:
(ASIDE) Probably not, but I don't think we can stay put and risk those Hungerers coming back. — Waywalker: Turlough and I need to find materials to bind this injury, if we're going to get you to safety.

WAYWALKER:
I have to walk.

DOCTOR:
Yes, perhaps we could make you some kind of crutch?

WAYWALKER:
I need to get to the Cavern before the ambrichor decays.

TURLOUGH:
Why?

WAYWALKER:
Because it's the Cavern of Becoming.

TURLOUGH:
What does that even mean?

DOCTOR:
There'll be plenty of time for questions later, Turlough. (TO WAYWALKER) Don't go anywhere, will you?

FX: TIME LAPSE BRIDGE.

SCENE 10: EXT. MOUNTAIN — LOWER SLOPES.

FX: FADE UP. DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH PICK THROUGH ROCKS FOR WOOD.

DOCTOR:
No that's no good. Going to need something sturdier.

FX: STICK CLATTERS AWAY.

TURLOUGH:
She talks to herself. Had you noticed?

DOCTOR:
Waywalker? Yes. I do too, sometimes. Don't you?

TURLOUGH:
I'm not sure she's quite normal.

DOCTOR:
We're the outsiders here, Turlough. For all we know her behaviour's perfectly normal.

TURLOUGH:
A skinny, malnourished thing like her coming up here to grab fruit off some sickly tree?

DOCTOR:
I suspect that fruit, if that's what it is-

TURLOUGH:
What else would it be?

DOCTOR:
I don't know, but it seemed to be growing in the tree's roots. Odd place for fruit.

TURLOUGH:
Odd place for tree roots, now you mention it. Sticking out in mid-air, I mean.

DOCTOR:
Whatever it is, I think picking it is part of a coming-of-age ritual. I imagine getting it's a test of bravery and dexterity (FX: HE SNAPS A THICK TWIG) and keeping your weight down.

TURLOUGH:
A test we helped Waywalker pass.

DOCTOR:
I suppose we did. (PICKS UP BRANCH) Ah, here we are, quite a respectable branch! Might even have come from that tree up there.

FX: WAYWALKER LIMPS FORWARD, WINCING AT WEIGHT TRANSFER.

WAYWALKER:
That will make a good support.

TURLOUGH:
Waywalker! Shouldn't you be resting that foot?

WAYWALKER:
I have been. It is much improved.

TURLOUGH:
You're still flinching.

WAYWALKER:
Which is why I'd like the branch.

DOCTOR:
I wouldn't say *much* improved, but that does look better. Let me see… (EXAMINES HER) Oh now, that's interesting. Quite a lot of heat in the clouded area and, unless I'm very much mistaken, rapid cellular repair. How've you managed that?

WAYWALKER:
I concentrated. As the Becoming approaches it is easier.

DOCTOR:
Remarkable. If only more of my friends had ankles like yours! Actually, I think one did…

FX: TIME LAPSE BRIDGE.

SCENE 11: EXT. MID-MOUNTAIN. APPROACHING CAVERN.

FX: FADE UP. MUD, A STREAM IN THE DISTANCE. THE TRAVELLERS LABOUR THROUGH. WAYWALKER TRYING TO MASK PAIN.

WAYWALKER:
Down here.

DOCTOR:
Take care, it looks a bit steep.

TURLOUGH:
Lean on me, Waywalker. It'll make the incline easier. Of course so would having a free hand.

FX: WAYWALKER LEANS ON HIM AS THEY NEGOTIATE DESCENT.

WAYWALKER:
My leg is still weak, I need to hold the stick.

TURLOUGH:
And your pod, naturally.

WAYWALKER:
The ambrichor is needed for the Becoming.

DOCTOR:
Is it?

WAYWALKER:
Yes, to become a true Waywalker.

TURLOUGH:
Hang on- become…? I thought Waywalker was your name.

WAYWALKER:
It is. It is the name of our people.

TURLOUGH:
All of them? Don't you have names of your own?

WAYWALKER:
Once we've Become we take the names of our paths. Farmer, Weaver, Defender…

TURLOUGH:
You just have titles? Not names?

DOCTOR:
It's not so strange. I find it focuses the mind rather. Your name's a title too, Turlough. Once upon a time it meant 'prompter', or 'spur to action'.

TURLOUGH:
Not where I came from, it didn't.

HUNGERER:
(DISTANT HOWL)

DOCTOR:
They never give up, do they?

WAYWALKER:
No.

TURLOUGH:
I imagine they're hungry.

WAYWALKER:
They are insatiable. The Defenders line the walled lands to keep them at bay, but the Hungerers never stop. I have seen them through many eyes. Cracking open our skulls, devouring our brains.

TURLOUGH:
Still, they make nice fur coats I imagine.

WAYWALKER:
We do not wear their pelts. They are unclean.

DOCTOR:
Perhaps you should. I think there's a hard winter on the way.

WAYWALKER:
This land is colder than it has been, yes.

DOCTOR:
Your sun's going through a funny time just now. It'll be further away and giving off less heat for a while. A few furs might make all the difference.

WAYWALKER:
It is not our way. The Hungerers give nothing to the world, and we take nothing from them.

DOCTOR:
Seems a little harsh. I'm sure they have some place in the eco-system.

WAYWALKER:
(MOVING OFF) This way now. Into the gorge.

TURLOUGH:
(SOTTO) Have you seen her skin?

DOCTOR:
(SOTTO) Yes, that clouding's spreading.

TURLOUGH:
(SOTTO) Part of the healing process?

DOCTOR:
(SOTTO) Let's hope so.

SCENE 12: INT. CAVE ENTRANCE

FX: FADE UP. EXTERIOR AMBIENCE AT CAVE MOUTH. A THIN STREAM TRICKLES THROUGH. THE TRAVELLERS ENTER. WAYWALKER REALLY SUFFERING NOW.

WAYWALKER:
Through here. The Cavern is near now.

TURLOUGH:
Won't we need lights?

WAYWALKER:
No.

DOCTOR:
You've been here before?

WAYWALKER:
Of course not. I have not yet Become.

DOCTOR:
No, silly me… But you knew where it is? You know we don't need lights.

WAYWALKER:
The Old Ones tell me.

DOCTOR:
They told you before we set out?

WAYWALKER:
No, now. Inside me.

DOCTOR:
You hear their voices?

WAYWALKER:
Yes. Those who Become are with us from the beginning of childhood.

DOCTOR:
I see.

WAYWALKER:
They guide us in all things until we're ready to Become. Without them few would survive.

DOCTOR:
I see. Fascinating. What do you think, Turlough, race memory genetically encoded to ensure survival in a hostile environment?

TURLOUGH:
Seems a bit unlikely.

DOCTOR:
And yet the trauma of a Tractator invasion was woven deep into your people's psyches.

TURLOUGH:
But that's different!

DOCTOR:
Is it? We all inherit behaviour from our ancestors. It seems the Waywalkers do so rather more directly, that's all. Like having a head full of past selves…

WAYWALKER:
Doctor… today, there have been times when the Old Ones failed to speak. That is not normal.

DOCTOR:
Really? When didn't they speak?

WAYWALKER:
When I was on the breaking branch… when the Hungerers had us surrounded.

DOCTOR:
Well, perhaps that's why. Perhaps you'd found yourself in situations their wisdom had no words for.

WAYWALKER:
I don't understand.

DOCTOR:
I suspect no-one who's faced those problems before has lived to pass on their wisdom.

WAYWALKER:
That's sad.

DOCTOR:
Yes, but it does make what you've managed today rather special, doesn't it?

WAYWALKER:
Thank you, Doctor. You've made me feel a little better.

TURLOUGH:
Just doing what his name demands… Hey, is that daylight up ahead?

FX: TURLOUGH RUSHES AHEAD.

DOCTOR:
Careful, Turlough!

CROSS TO:

SCENE 13: INT. CAVERN OF BECOMING [CONTINUOUS]

FX: 'SPRINGY' ACOUSTIC, THE STREAM RUNNING STRONGER. UNDERLYING ALL, A PULSING, ORGANIC DRONE. THE SOUND OF A HUGE, LIVING JELLY.

TURLOUGH:
(HALTING AT ENTRANCE; CALLING BACK) No, it's not sunlight. This whole chamber's got a sort of yellow glow.

DOCTOR:
(APPROACHING WITH WAYWALKER) The Cavern of Becoming, I presume?

WAYWALKER:
Yes!

DOCTOR:
Actually, I think it is sunlight, Turlough – there's a small opening in the roof back there.

TURLOUGH:
But the way the light's spread out through the air…

DOCTOR:
That's not air. Not for the most part. Look carefully. Most of this cave is taken up by some sort of gelatinous substance.

WAYWALKER:
It's the Pathmaker.

SPRING VOICE:
Consume the ambrichor.

AUTUMN VOICE:
Become consumed.

FX: WAYWALKER BREAKS OPEN AMBRICHOR POD. VEGETABLE FIBRES TEARING.

TURLOUGH:
What are you doing?

WAYWALKER:
I must drink the ambrichor, and find my way. (DRINKS FROM POD)

FX: GLOOPY LIQUID GLUGS INTO HER MOUTH.

DOCTOR:
Of course, the ambrichor - the fluid inside it! It's made of the same stuff as this jelly!

WAYWALKER:
(WIPES MOUTH) I’m ready, Pathmaker. (WALKS FORWARD)

TURLOUGH:
Wait, where are you going? You can’t just walk into all that stuff…!

DOCTOR:
Let her go, Turlough.

FX: SHE WALKS INTO THE JELLY AND IS ABSORBED. IT FIZZES.

CROSS TO:

SCENE 14: INT. INSIDE PATHMAKER [CONTINUOUS]

FX: UNDERWATERY ACOUSTIC. THICK GURGLES. PATHMAKER DRONE UNDER. AUTUMN AND SPRING VOICES CHORUSING.

AUTUMN AND SPRING VOICES:
Let the Pathmaker in…
Let it find you out…
Let it find your purpose…
Let it make your way.

FX: WAYWALKER GASPING IN JELLY. BUBBLES RISING, FIZZING.

CROSS BACK TO:

SCENE 15: INT. CAVERN OF BECOMING [CONTINUOUS]

FX: BUBBLING, SIMMERING FROM PATHMAKER.

TURLOUGH:
That thing, it's feeding on her!

DOCTOR:
I think she's feeding on it, too. They're symbiotic life forms! Maybe even variations on the same root creature…

FX: BUBBLES BLOB AND SPIT ATOP PATHMAKER.

DOCTOR:
Of course! See those tiny bubbles drifting up, Turlough? They're going to float up through the roof.

TURLOUGH:
And?

DOCTOR:
And they'll be carried by the winds until they lodge in the roots of a tree far above and feed on it. They'll be the next crop of ambrichor.

TURLOUGH:
I don't understand what's happening.

DOCTOR:
Nor do I, entirely. But my guess is that this 'Pathmaker' is absorbing our friend's thoughts.

TURLOUGH:
Why?

DOCTOR:
To preserve them in aspic, add them to the collective.

TURLOUGH:
But I thought the Waywalkers could already hear their ancestors' voices?

DOCTOR:
Yes, but perhaps only those who go through the Becoming get to add their voice to the chorus.

CROSS BACK TO:

SCENE 16: INT. INSIDE PATHMAKER [CONTINUOUS]

FX: MORE BUBBLE AND CHURN. A CRAZY MESS OF DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH'S WORDS TO WAYWALKER FROM PREVIOUS SCENES:

DOCTOR:
Ah, well — Turlough and I were born on worlds with rather fiercer suns. That's why we're not translucent.

TURLOUGH:
You're going to attack three great ape creatures with a cricket ball?

DOCTOR:
[…] This clouding in the subdermis might be the equivalent of scabbing…

TURLOUGH:
[…] Don't you have names of your own?

DOCTOR:
Your sun's going through a funny time just now. It'll be further away and giving off less heat for a while. A few furs might make all the difference.

SPRING AND AUTUMN VOICES:
No! No! These are not Waywalker thoughts! This is not our way! Let them go!

WAYWALKER:
I can't!

FX: WAYWALKER STRUGGLES, CHOKING, DROWNING. CROSS BACK TO:

SCENE 17: INT. CAVERN OF BECOMING [CONTINUOUS]

FX: INCREASED PATHMAKER FIZZ AND CHURN.

TURLOUGH:
She's struggling. Something's not right!

DOCTOR:
It may just be part of the process.

TURLOUGH:
No! She needs help.

FX: HE CHARGES INTO THE GLOOP.

DOCTOR:
Turlough! What are you doing? Turlough!

CROSS TO:

SCENE 18: INT. INSIDE PATHMAKER [CONTINUOUS]

FX: CACOPHONY OF BUBBLING. A WALL OF DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH LINES, LOOPING AROUND (AS IN PREVIOUS SCENE). SPRING AND AUTUMN VOICES ABOVE.

SPRING AND AUTUMN VOICES:
No! No! No!

TURLOUGH:
(GRABS WAYWALKER) It's alright, Waywalker, I've got you!!!

FX: A TREACLY SPLASH AS TURLOUGH EXITS WITH WAYWALKER, INTO:

SCENE 19: INT. CAVERN OF BECOMING [CONTINUOUS]

FX: GASPING, TURLOUGH STAGGERS FROM THE JELLY CARRYING WAYWALKER. THE PATHMAKER CHURN EASES.

DOCTOR:
What have you done, Turlough?

TURLOUGH:
Saved her life, I think. Get out of the way, so I can put her down!

DOCTOR:
You realise you may have intervened in a crucial part of an entirely natural process!

FX: TURLOUGH LOWERS WAYWALKER DOWN. SHE COUGHS, CLEARING JELLY FROM HER THROAT.

WAYWALKER:
It was attacking me!

TURLOUGH:
See? All the new skin clouding! She's hurt!

WAYWALKER:
I've been rejected. The Pathmaker found no way for me.

DOCTOR:
Why not?

WAYWALKER:
You can't have a new way with the Old Ones' voices still within. Those you no longer need are stripped away. Some… voices I did not want to lose.

DOCTOR:
Our voices, you mean.

WAYWALKER:
For that the Pathfinder chose to lose me.

DOCTOR:
I'm sorry.

FX: TIME LAPSE BRIDGE.

SCENE 20: EXT. MOUNTAIN — CAVE ENTRANCE

FX: FADE UP. BACKGROUND AS SCENE 11. THE TRIO WALK UP TO CAVE ENTRANCE.

TURLOUGH:
So, what now, Waywalker?

WAYWALKER:
I will return to the walled lands.

DOCTOR:
The village in the valley?

WAYWALKER:
Yes. I will tell the elders I have failed.

TURLOUGH:
Because of me?

WAYWALKER:
No, but you may have saved me a worse failure. I will not become adult, but I can still serve my people. You have opened my eyes, Doctor. This land is changing. New ideas might be the only way to survive.

DOCTOR:
Do you need help?

WAYWALKER:
No. This is something I should do alone.

DOCTOR:
I quite understand. You can be your people's first generalist. A Jill of No Trades! — Sorry, probably a tricky one for the TARDIS to translate.

WAYWALKER:
The TARDIS?

TURLOUGH:
Our ship from… the other worlds. It landed up the mountain.

DOCTOR:
Yes, and we really ought to start climbing back up there, if we want to reach it before dusk.

TURLOUGH:
What, with all those "Hungerers" about?

WAYWALKER:
The Hungerers have no sense of you, Turlough. It's Waywalkers they hunt.

TURLOUGH:
Isn't that something you could have mentioned earlier?

WAYWALKER:
(BRIEFLY TROUBLED) It's something I don't think I knew before… Goodbye, Doctor. Goodbye, Turlough.

TURLOUGH:
Are you sure you be alright? You *have* been quite badly hurt.

DOCTOR:
One of the ways we learn, I'm afraid, Turlough. — Goodbye, Waywalker.

FX: THEY GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS. FADE.

SCENE 21: EXT. MOUNTAIN — MIDWAY

FX: FADE UP. DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH CLIMB.

TURLOUGH:
So what was the Pathmaker, Doctor? I can't believe something like that grew up by chance.

DOCTOR:
No? But you can believe in giraffes' necks, or the social structure of an ant nest.

TURLOUGH:
There's a bit of a difference…

DOCTOR:
Only in magnitude. It's a big universe. One-in-a-billion chances happen. The Waywalkers and the Pathmaker may have evolved together. They might be the vestiges of some old colony ship. An organic computer and its gestalt crew. Who knows?

TURLOUGH:
Well, if all you're going to do is guess…

DOCTOR:
(HURT) Informed speculation, Turlough. — It seems the Pathmaker remakes the Waywalkers when they approach maturity. I imagine drinking the ambrichor helps facilitate a bond, and eases the cerebral metamorphosis. The Pathmaker absorbs the youngster's memories, sees what role they're best suited for, and recreates them accordingly. Essentially, it's a very firm Careers Advisor.

TURLOUGH:
But what does the Pathmaker get out of it?

DOCTOR:
It feeds. It releases ambrichor. It perpetuates the cycle. A perfectly happy, stable ecosystem. Until of course that sun up there starts messing around and the weather turns cold… (BEAT; STOPS CLIMBING) You know, that still bothers me.

TURLOUGH:
The cold?

DOCTOR:
No. The Hungerers' place in this ecosystem.

TURLOUGH:
Predatory.

DOCTOR:

Yes, but it must be pretty slim pickings. To reach the size they have on what little there is up here…

TURLOUGH:
Perhaps they get to that size before they come here? Maybe they raid the Waywalkers' crops.

DOCTOR:
No, I don't think they get past the walls. Unless… (DAWNING) Oh no. I've just realised something.

FX: HE STARTS RUNNING DOWN MOUNTAIN.

TURLOUGH:
Where are you going?

DOCTOR:
(RECEDING) Down to the village, before it's too late!

TURLOUGH:
Here we go again. (FOLLOWS)

SCENE 22: INT. WAYWALKER HUT

FX: LARGE GROUP OF VILLAGERS ASSEMBLED.

VILLAGERS:
(EXCITEDLY) She has returned from the Cavern!/ But what has she Become?/ What is her path?

WAYWALKER:
(TO MAKE HERSELF HEARD) Waywalkers. — Waywalkers!

VILLAGERS:
Hush, she wishes to speak!/ Hush!/ Hush!
.
WAYWALKER:
I have returned from the Cavern, but I have been given no path.

ELDER:
Then… you know what must follow.

WAYWALKER:
I do, Elder, but I must speak first. My… (STAB OF PAIN — GASPS) My thoughts will not join yours in future seasons, but I — (GASPS) I hope some of my words may. Please. Remember if you can. There are other ways to be. I've — (HINT OF HUNGERER SNARL/SNORT) I've seen them.

NB: SHE'S BECOMING A HUNGERER, SLOWLY. A PAINFUL PROCESS.

WAYWALKER:
(THROUGH PAIN) Our crops grow weak. The sky roots are sickly. I've seen the best and worst of past seasons, and this has been the worst of all. Soon, the old ways may no longer keep us safe.

FX: WAYWALKER'S SINEWS CREAK, SKIN RIPPING.

WAYWALKER:
Others have spoken like this before. I know I must be exiled. I only hope that this time, you don't dismiss my words as the snarl of another whose skin grows dark. That you can you look beyond this pelt to see one who was once like you.

ELDER:
That is enough. — Go now, Hungerer! You have become unclean!!!

WAYWALKER:
(GROWLS)

VILLAGERS:
(JEERING) Unclean!/ Unclean!/ Unclean!!!

SCENE 23: EXT. MOUNTAIN – LOWER SLOPES

FX: DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH RUNNING.

TURLOUGH:
Doctor, wait!!!

DOCTOR:
I should have realised why it didn't make sense. The Hungerers are just a different form of Waywalker - the ones that the Pathmaker rejects!

SCENE 24: EXT. VALLEY - VILLAGE GATES

FX: WAYWALKER STAGGERS ONTO GRASS.

WAYWALKER:
(PANTING, PAINED)

ELDER:
(CALLING FROM HEIGHT) Close the wall behind it!

FX: WOODEN GATE DRAGGED SHUT AND BOLTED AS THE DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH HURRY DOWN THE MOUNTAIN.

DOCTOR:
(CALLING FROM DISTANCE) No! Wait!

ELDER:
Begone, Hungerer! Join your mountain exiles, pathless thing!

VILLAGERS:
(BEHIND GATES — ALL CHEER THANKFULLY)

FX: CHEERS DIE DOWN AS DOCTOR AND TURLOUGH ARRIVE.

WAYWALKER:
(GIVES HUNGERER-ISH SNORT)

DOCTOR:
Oh no, is that you?

WAYWALKER:
(HER VOICE NOTICEABLY DEEPER, MORE HUNGERER-ISH FROM HERE) Am I so changed, already?

TURLOUGH:
Well, you're beginning to sprout hair…

DOCTOR:
It may still be reversible. If I can somehow make a psychic bond with the Pathmaker, I may be able to negotiate something.

WAYWALKER:
No. Change too far gone. I feel ancestral voices slipping from me. My voice too.

DOCTOR:
This is all our fault, Turlough!

TURLOUGH:
How come?

DOCTOR:
Don't you see? It was our voices that made her a Hungerer. When the Pathmaker rejected her, she lost her place in this society.

WAYWALKER:
You gave taste for knowledge, but hunger for something always there.

DOCTOR:
We must put a stop to this! End this monstrous order!

TURLOUGH:
(SCEPTICAL) Show the Waywalkers another way, I suppose?

DOCTOR:
Exactly!

WAYWALKER:
This way has lasted many seasons. You would have to kill Pathmaker to end it. That would end… everything.

DOCTOR:
But-

WAYWALKER:
Slow change only hope. Change from within.

DOCTOR:
No. We should fight this!

TURLOUGH:
And how do you propose to do that, Doctor? Destroy the Pathmaker, and you destroy the basis of these people's society.

DOCTOR:
Yes, I realise that, Turlough…

TURLOUGH:
You'll have to take the place of the Pathmaker. You'll have to rule over these people. Decide their futures. Choose their path. Crush any dissent. Can you do that?

DOCTOR:
Perhaps not.

TURLOUGH:
Right. So if we're not about to start a revolution here, we need to just go!!!

DOCTOR:
So much for a 'spur to action'.

TURLOUGH:
We don't have any other choice!

WAYWALKER:
Things may change, Doctor. Get better.

DOCTOR:
How?

WAYWALKER:
I'm not all Hungerer, I think. Turlough pulled me from Pathmaker… before my way was fully lost.

TURLOUGH:
I did?

DOCTOR:
(CRUMB OF HOPE) You did, yes! — Waywalker: can you do it? Can you find a new way? Make another world?

WAYWALKER:
I… hope. — I go now. You too. (SHE STAGGERS AWAY)

BEAT.

TURLOUGH:
Come on, Doctor. We've our own path to make, back up the mountain. (HE WALKS OFF)

DOCTOR:
(TO SELF) I hope so too, Waywalker.

HUNGERER:
(HOWLS DISTANTLY)

DOCTOR:
(TO SELF) I really do.

THE END